

**Testimony in Support of
S.B. 1093, An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Juvenile Justice Policy
and Oversight Committee Concerning Education**

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Chairmen McCrory and Curry, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on provisions of S.B. 1093, An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee Concerning Education. The School and State Finance Project supports the recommendations outlined in S.B. 1093.

While the rate of in- and out-of-school suspensions in Connecticut has declined by 3.9 percent from 2014-15 to 2018-19, the disparity in the rate of suspensions between Black and Hispanic/Latino students compared to their white counterparts is still disproportionately high. According to the 2020-21 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools, produced by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), one out of every 34 white students has received at least one suspension. Comparatively, one out of every 10 Black students, and one out of every 14 Hispanic/Latino students have received the same infraction.

S.B. 1093 requires districts to assess and strategize how to address suspension rates in districts with high rates of suspensions. This bill would implement a reduction in class sizes, increased hiring of support personnel, and annual trainings — all which will help support students.

However, we cannot ignore that the concentration of these suspensions is in majority-BIPOC districts, which are also the lowest-resourced districts in the state and serve a large concentration of the state's highest-need students. This means the requirement to reduce class sizes and increase staff to support this proposed legislation will increase the financial burden on these districts unless they are provided with adequate funding to enact the bill's recommended policy changes.

So, while we support the spirit of S.B. 1093 for the reasons stated above, we urge this body to ensure districts are provided the necessary funding to implement these policies. This bill, in its current form, does not provide the resources to aid in the reduction of classroom sizes or the hiring of additional support staff to oversee its implementation.

With the proper funding, through a student-centered funding system that better addresses the wide disparities in Connecticut public education, the policies in this bill can

help reduce the inequities experienced by the state's highest-need districts, which can lead to a decrease in the disproportionate number of suspensions and an increase in student outcomes.

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 1093, and please feel free to reach out to us via the contact information below should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

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About the School and State Finance Project

The School and State Finance Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit policy organization that works collaboratively with policymakers, communities, and other key stakeholders to develop data-driven solutions that ensure all public school students receive equitable education funding that supports their learning needs.